

# Editorial

We are delighted to invite you to explore issue 32 of *Current Swedish Archaeology*. It features seven original research articles, six book reviews, and three notices. This edition highlights the breadth of archaeological research in Sweden, its main geographical focus. It also discusses archaeological phenomena in other areas, such as Norway, North-Eastern Europe and even the Circumpolar North. All contributions demonstrate the richness and possibilities of different methodological and theoretical underpinnings, and how they bring out new knowledge. At the surface, these studies deal with everything from graves and burial practices, to animal migration and figurines. At their core, they challenge taken-for-granted ideas about environmental, human, and multispecies conditions and relations, while exploring new pathways to understand lived experiences in a constantly evolving world.

In the first part, Lars Gustavsen provides a reassessment of the visual symbolism of Iron Age burial mounds through a detailed study of Halvdanshaugen in Norway. By incorporating vegetation as a visual barrier in his viewshed analyses, Gustavsen challenges generalisations about mounds as eye catching, landscape-wide symbols. Instead a more nuanced, context-specific understanding is proposed, highlighting diversity in mound construction and use and its link to sensory and spatial relationships in the mounds immediate surrounding terrain. The article 'Moose Trappers' by Lars Göran Spång, Wiebke Neumann, David Loeffler, and Göran Ericsson also starts from landscapes as an active agent in shaping relationships, in this case between animal migration patterns and human foraging strategies. Through Agent-Based Modeling they revisit assumptions about Neolithic hunter-gatherer lifeways in northern Sweden, examining how moose, wolves, and human hunters coexisted in delicate ecological balance. Their findings challenge earlier migration models and highlight the complex interdependencies that shaped territoriality and hunter-gatherer resource use. In 'Groundbreakers', Alison Klevnäs, Cecilia Ljung, Astrid

A. Noterman, and Emma Brownlee integrate osteological evidence with radiocarbon dating to better understand mortuary practices on Gotland during the late Viking Age and early medieval period. The results show a prolonged use of both early churchyards and traditional burial sites, along with the reuse of ancient graves. This challenges simplistic divisions between pagan and Christian traditions, showing innovation and adaptation rather than a clear rupture between religious systems. Completing the first part of the issue, Fredrik Fahlander likewise investigates burial practices, but here focus is set on the ritual roles of animals in Late Iron Age cremation assemblages at North Spånga, Sweden. He challenges binary classifications of animals remains in graves, such as friends versus food, focusing instead on their placement and fragmentation. Based on this he suggests that animals made generative contributions to funerary practices, playing protective and transformative roles.

The next part of this issue is a special section. It has its own editorial, but in short, it examines figurines through ontological, new animist, and new materialist lenses, shifting away from traditional representational interpretations. Erik Solfeldt and Anna Naglaya's paper highlights the animistic role of Siberian figurines, viewing them as animated beings within ecological and spiritual relations. Tobias Lindström's study on Neolithic anthropomorphic figurines suggests they were "interactable" beings that influenced human actions. Helen Chittock and Andrew Meirion Jones challenge the decoding of non-representational imagery, proposing it reflects affective potentials rather than fixed meanings. These contributions underscore a shift in figurine research towards a material, relational, and ontological focus, advancing archaeological theory and connecting to broader fields like anthropology, ethnology, and art history.

Together, these articles push the boundaries of archaeological inquiry, opening new avenues to understand the dynamics of human, object, landscape and multispecies interactions. They highlight the rich diversity of archaeological research in Scandinavia and beyond, emphasizing the dynamic interplay of cultural, environmental, and ritual practices over time.

This issue's book and dissertation reviews similarly demonstrate the incredible breadth of contemporary archaeological scholarship in Sweden, showcasing innovative methodologies and interdisciplinary approaches to long-standing archaeological questions. László Bartosiewicz lauds Stella Macheridis' *Animal Husbandry in Iron Age Scania* for setting a high standard in zooarchaeological research, shedding light on animal-human dynamics during times of environmental and social change. Sophie Bergerbrant reviews *In the Darkest of Days*, edited by Matthew J. Walsh, Sean O'Neill, and Lasse Sørensen. The anthology offers diverse perspectives on human sacrifice in the prehistory of southern Scandinavia from the Mes-

olithic to the Viking Age, with a strong focus on the Iron Age. Charlotte Damm discusses Aija Macâne's dissertation, *Stone Age Companions*, which explores diverse human-animal relationships in hunter-gatherer burials across northeastern Europe from the eighth to the third millennium BCE. Daniel Löwenborg reviews Paola Derudas' dissertation on innovative digital methodologies, showcasing how integrating 3D models with excavation documentation fosters multivocal interpretations and reuse of archaeological data. Christina Rosén reflects on Anton Larsson's *Landslide Archaeology*, which examines the dual impacts of landslides on archaeological heritage, offering valuable insights for cultural heritage work. Lastly, Marianne Skandfer reviews Carina Bennerhag's *Steel Making Hunter-Gatherers in Ancient Arctic Europe*, an innovative study of early metal production in the Arctic, emphasizing the value of meticulous documentation and interdisciplinary collaboration.

As always, do not miss our notices at the end of the issue. Read about how Susanna Carlsten's report can help Swedish museums prioritize collections for evacuation during disasters, and Ashley Green and Christian Horn's announcement on the launch of a new and improved website for Svenskt HällristningsForskningsArkiv, and Neil Price, Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonson, and John Ljungkvist introduction of The World in the Viking Age, a new Centre of Excellence at Uppsala University.

Lastly, a note on the development of *Current Swedish Archaeology*: we are excited to introduce Online First publishing. Once an article is peer-reviewed, language revised, and typeset, it becomes immediately available online, often months before the print edition. These articles, complete with unique Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for easy citation, can be found on our webpage. This ensures faster access to important discoveries and aligns with our Open Access (OA) principle, making archaeological research easily accessible to academic, professional, and public communities. Since CSA's founding in 1993, OA has been a core value, offering free access to research long before it became mainstream. In light of the rise of Article Processing Charges (APCs) at large publishing companies, which can exclude researchers from underfunded regions or institutions and undermine the inclusivity OA promises, CSA remains committed to providing unrestricted access to high-quality research at no cost to authors or readers. As part of Publicera, Sweden's national platform for scholarly journals managed by the National Library of Sweden, we can uphold our values, and with support from institutions like the Swedish Research Council, we continue to champion OA and the excellence of Swedish archaeological research.

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editors of *Current Swedish Archaeology*